

(Draft – Awaiting Formal Approval)

**MINUTES OF THE
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
and
POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS
INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, September 16, 2009 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 30 House Building

Members

Sen. Peter C. Knudson, Senate Chair
Rep. Craig A. Frank, House Cochair
Sen. Jon J. Greiner
Sen. Scott D. McCoy
Sen. Ralph Okerlund
Rep. Douglas C. Aagard
Rep. Sheryl L. Allen
Rep. Ron Bigelow
Rep. Jim Bird
Rep. Ben C. Ferry
Rep. Janice M. Fisher
Rep. Kerry W. Gibson
Rep. Keith Grover
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson

Rep. John G. Mathis
Rep. Jennifer M. Seelig
Rep. Curt R. Webb
Rep. Larry B. Wiley

Members Absent:

Rep. Fred Hunsaker, House Cochair

Staff Present:

Mr. Benjamin N. Christensen, Policy Analyst
Mr. Joseph Wade, Policy Analyst
Mr. Christopher R. Parker, Associate General Counsel
Mr. Robert H. Rees, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Frank called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. He expressed appreciation for Associate General Counsel, Bob Rees and Chris Parker, whose committee responsibilities have been changed to other committees. He introduced Emily Brown and Victoria Stirling, who will replace them.

MOTION: Sen. McCoy moved to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2009 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Rep. Allen, Rep. Ferry, Rep. Gibson, Rep. Grover, Rep. Mathis, and Rep. Seelig were absent for the vote.

2. Quality Growth Commission Annual Report

Mr. John F. Bennett, Executive Director, Quality Growth Commission, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, gave an annual report on the Quality Growth Commission, which advises the Legislature and the governor on growth management issues. The report included the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Program. He distributed a memo written to the Legislature listing the needs of Utah's cities and towns, as well as information on planning grants and the LeRay McAllister Fund 2005-2007. He noted that each year, the McCallister Fund has had more requests than there are funds to fill the needs.

3. Clarity on "For and Against" Votes for a Referendum

Mr. Ben Christensen gave a slide presentation titled, "Referendum Clarity." He explained that under current statute, a vote in favor means the voter wants the referendum to be successful and to block the law from taking effect. He presented an alternate approach, which would allow a vote in favor to mean the voter is for the law taking effect. He explained that this approach is the way most states present a referendum, and is in keeping with the concept that the law is referred to voters for their final approval. The Committee discussed whether the current statute should be revised to give more clarity on referendum ballots for voters.

Mr. Michael Cragun, Office of the Lt. Governor, spoke in support of revising the statute. He referred to the bill previously distributed in the committee packet and explained how the confusing language originated.

MOTION: Rep. Fisher moved to direct staff to draft a bill that clarifies the language on a ballot for a referendum to provide that a vote in favor means a vote to allow the law to take effect. The motion passed with Rep. Hendrickson voting in opposition. Sen. McCoy, Rep. Ferry, and Rep. Mathis were absent for the vote.

4. Governor's Commission on Strengthening Utah's Democracy - Update

Mr. Kirk L. Jowers, Chair, Governor's Commission on Strengthening Utah's Democracy, Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah, distributed and reviewed "Mission, Membership, and Executive Endorsements." He updated the Committee on the Commission's efforts and recommendations in the areas of campaign finance, lobbying regulations, and elections. He explained their specific focus, which was how changes could be made that would improve voter turnout.

5. State Vehicle Fleet Operations Efficiency

Sen. Stowell stated the centralized government vehicle fleet in Utah is a significant cost to the state. He explained there are efforts being made to develop and coordinate the implementation of a statewide vehicle fleet cost-efficiency plan.

Ms. Margaret E. Chambers, Division of Fleet Operations (DFO) and Surplus Services, Department of Administrative Services, gave a slide presentation and distributed "Mileage Date by Agency" and "Count of Take Home Drivers." Her report showed cost efficiencies already in place, reduction strategies being tested by DFO, and new strategies and legislation being pursued to reduce fleet costs.

6. State Surplus Property Services - Briefing

Ms. Chambers gave a slide presentation explaining the Federal Surplus Property Program. She explained what the program is, who uses it, what has changed over the years, and who pays for the program.

7. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Webb moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Okerlund, Rep. Allen, Rep. Bigelow, Rep. Gibson, and Rep. Mathis were absent for the vote.

Chair Frank adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.